

“Misuse of Old Testament Prophecy In Premillennialism”

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Text: Ephesians 3:8-11

Theme: To show how premillennialists misuse Old Testament prophecies in an attempt to prove their premillennial doctrines

Introduction:

1. Part 1 of a 2 part series on premillennialism - (Next on New Testament prophecy)
2. Use of any prophecy to support premillennialism constitutes a misuse -
3. Definitions
 - a. Amillennialism - “no millennium” - Christian dispensation
 - b. Postmillennialism - The return of Christ *after* the millennium
 - c. Premillennialism - explain -
 - 1) Regular - church goes through tribulation
 - 2) Dispensationalists - church saved out of the tribulation
4. Basically, denominational people insist one must be a premillennialist or he is a modernist.
 - a. But it really doesn't matter what they think.

- b. Except so far as they influence our thinking.

Discussion:

- I. History of premillennialism.
 - A. Outside the church
 - 1. Not much reference to it until after the Reformation
 - 2. Been gaining force in our country -
 - 3. But met head on
 - a. Wallace debated Norris in 1934, Webber 1937, Tingley 1938
 - b. Oliphant debated Rice in 1935
 - 4. Present well-knowns
 - a. Billy Graham, Hal Lindsey, Kenneth Taylor (Living Bible), Jerry Falwall, Jimmy Swaggart, etc.
 - b. II Timothy 4:1
 - B. Inside the church -
 - 1. 1915, R.H. Boll - published *Word & Work*
 - 2. 1918, Highland church in Louisville ,Ky. went premillennial but two elders didn't - they were withdrawn from.
 - 3. 1927, R.H. Boll, H. Leo Boles - written debate
 - 4. 1933 Charles M. Neal - Foy E. Wallace, Jr., debated in Winchester, Ky.
 - 5. E.L. Jorgensen
 - 6. As we know today, there are slightly over 100 congregations of the church which hold to this - less than 1% - *Where the Saints Meet*, 1987.
- II. Why is it important to preach about it? - consider some of it's tenets -
 - A. The kingdom of God has not established - church substituted
 - B. Jews will be restored to Palestine - National conversion of Jews to Christ.

- C. These two positions constitute infidelity -
 - 1. Kingdom - God failed - Read Boettner, *The Millennium*, p. 229
 - 2. Jews - discourages their present conversion.
Read from Russell (quoted by Lambert, *Russellism Unveiled*), pp. 77,78.

III. Exposing misuse of Old Testament prophecy - general approach - involves the rule of interpretation.

- A. All interpretations of futuristic prophesies must bear in mind the infallible inspiration of the scriptures - therefore they must harmonize - must be overall harmony with Bible concepts.
 - 1. Premillennialists say the kingdom has not been established -
 - a. Daniel 2:44; 7:14
 - b. Church substituted
 - c. But this is not harmonious
 - 1. Ephesians 3:8-11 - eternal purpose
 - 2. Colossians 1:13,18 - church is the kingdom.
 - 3. Mark 9:1; Matthew 16:18,19; Colossians 1:13,18
 - 2. They quote many passages referring to Israel and Judah
 - a. Say it must be literal Israel and Judah
 - b. But - not necessarily
 - 1. Galatians 6:16 - the church is called the "Israel of God"
 - 2. Romans 2:28,29 - Christians are called Jews
- B. Interpretations of prophecy must not contradict specific plain statements in the Bible.
 - 1. Last days
 - 2. They talk about the signs of the times, etc.

- a. To them “last days” refers to the time immediately before the “rapture,” “millennium,” and ultimate glorification -
 - b. They quote passages with the phrase “last days” and have them fulfilled in their premillennial ideas - Isaiah 2:1,2; Micah 4:1,2
 - c. But- Acts 2:17; Hebrews 1:1,2
- C. Interpretation of prophecy must take into account all that is said on any given subject -
- 1. The land promises - Genesis 12:1; 15:18
 - 2. Premillennialists say only partially fulfilled.
 - 3. But they fail to take into account-
 - a. Joshua 21:43-45
 - 1) Exodus 23:30,31
 - 2) I Kings 4:21-24
 - b. The inheritance was conditional- Joshua 23:12-16

IV. Exposing misuse of Old Testament prophecy in premillennialism - specific approach. This would involve examining individual passages.

- A. We would insist that there must be an examination of contexts -
- 1. Isaiah 2:2-4
 - a. Rawlinson (Pulpit Commentary) says vv. 2,3 are fulfilled in the church
 - b. But v. 4 - “clearly not yet fulfilled”
 - 2. Context shows v.4 to be a continuation of the discussion of vv. 2,3 .
 - a. Peace and harmony in the church
 - b. No longer separation of nations
 - c. This, in turn, gives us the idea of Isaiah 65:17-25; 11:1-11
- B. We would insist that futuristic prophecies do not always demand a literal physical fulfillment -

1. Blackstone - p. 170 - quotes Jeremiah 31:9,10,33 and says they are fulfilled in the literal return of the Jews to Palestine -
2. But he forgets about inspired interpretation - Hebrews 8:8-13

Conclusion:

Invitation: